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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Tuesday, November 27, 1934.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Thanksgiving Questions And Answers." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

--ooOoo--

Whether you're cooking your own turkey or whether you're going out to dinner this year, I think you'll be interested in the Thanksgiving questions to be answered today and in what the experts have to say in reply.

The first inquiry is from a lady who says she has never roasted a turkey before and wants to know whether she should cover her bird during his stay in the oven or whether she should leave the cover off.

The answer is, "Sometimes yes and sometimes no, all depending on how old your turkey is and how fat."

If you have a plump young turkey, I'd say leave the cover off. Roast a young turkey in an open pan on a rack to keep it from sticking to the bottom and getting overbrowned.

But if you have a turkey a year or more old, you'll probably need a cover on your roaster -- on the same principle that you cook the less-tender cuts of meat in a covered pot.

At Thanksgiving time most turkeys you buy on the market are young birds, and according to the experts in the Bureau of Home Economics here's the way to roast a young turkey to a golden brown turn.

After you've stuffed your bird with a nice savory bread crumb stuffing and tied the legs and wings close to the body, then rub it well with butter, sprinkle it with salt, and pat it with flour all over. Next, put the turkey breast down on the rack in the roasting pan and slide it into the oven.

I hear somebody asking, "What about water in the pan?"

"No," the experts say, "Don't put water around a young turkey. Water in a roasting pan makes steam. And steam around a turkey or any other meat draws out the juices. You don't need to steam tender meat."

All right, that's settled. No water in the pan for a young turkey. The next question is: "How hot should the oven be when you put your turkey in? Well, if you're using a gas range so that you can change the temperature of your oven



quickly, then have it hot (around 450 degrees F.) at the start. This will brown the turkey lightly in about half an hour. Then reduce the heat quickly to very moderate (about 325 degrees F.). Leave the oven door open to cool it down while you turn the turkey over and baste it with melted fat. It's this slow cooking at moderate temperature for most of the time that keeps the juices in the turkey.

If you can't change the temperature of your oven quickly, as for instance in a coal stove, then have the heat moderate all the time the turkey is roasting.

Of course, a turkey in the oven needs to be watched and turned, and basted every half hour or so. A young 10-pound turkey (I mean 10 pounds as you buy it in the market) will need somewhere around two hours and a quarter in the oven at the temperatures I've given. The old-timers at turkey cooking say to test for doneness by running a steel skewer or a cooking fork into the bird's thigh next to the breast. Then look carefully at the juice that runs out. If the juice doesn't show the slightest red tinge, the turkey is done.

I find several letters here inquiring what kind of stuffing to use with turkey. Well, you can't go wrong on plain savory stuffing made with dry bread crumbs and seasoned with fat, salt and pepper, savory seasoning and chopped onion, parsley and celery.

But, of course, stuffing is a matter of taste, and you'll want to suit yourself. Stuffing recipes are so numerous that you'll have plenty to choose from. We mentioned mushroom stuffing last week. The richer, heartier stuffings are made with sausage, nuts -- especially chestnuts, and oysters. Then, people who like moist stuffing enjoy that made from mashed sweet or white potatoes or from boiled rice. Others like to feature fruit in their stuffing -- chopped tart apples and raisins mixed with the bread crumbs, or even diced dried prunes and apricots.

The menu we talked over yesterday features yellow rather than white turnips. Yellow turnips have one characteristic that makes them a better choice than the white -- they contain vitamin A. The art in cooking turnips is to use as little water as possible, cook no longer than necessary to make them tender, and use an uncovered cooking vessel. Peel the turnips, dice them, drop them into a small amount of lightly salted boiling water, cook until just tender, mash, season and serve. If you dice them, they'll take less time to cook and lose less food value. Short cooking also makes for the nicest flavor. If you leave the top off the kettle you'll avoid a good deal of turnip odor around the house.

Tomorrow we'll talk about cranberries in general. Today, I want you to have the recipe for cranberry chiffon pie -- a new recipe for a most beautiful holiday pie. This is one of a group of one-crust pies made with a fruit-juice, gelatin and egg filling and called "chiffon" because of its light texture. You'll remember lemon chiffon pie, of course, and orange, chocolate and strawberry chiffon. Well, now about the cranberry chiffon. This recipe calls for nine ingredients. Here they are:



3 cups of cranberries,  
1 cup of hot water,  
1 cup of sugar,  
1/4 teaspoon of salt,  
2 eggs,  
1/4 cup of cold water,  
1-1/2 tablespoons of gelatin,  
2 tablespoons of powdered sugar, and  
Pastry.

I'll repeat that list. (REPEAT)

First, bake a pie-crust shell, size nine inches, with a high rim to hold the filling. Then, boil the cranberries in the hot water until they're soft and then press them through a fine sieve. Now add sugar, salt and well-beaten yolks of eggs and cook over hot water for a few minutes. Soak the gelatin in the cold water first, and then dissolve it in the hot mixture. Now chill the mixture. When it begins to set, fold in the whites of eggs which you have beaten stiff with the powdered sugar. Blend thoroughly. This quantity of cranberry chiffon filling will be just enough for your nine-inch pie crust.

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